

The page



The Coliseum was jammed the evening of August 21, 1964, and the young crowd there to enjoy and salute the Beatles included Kathie Kovar, 14, (now Kathi Felter) clutching a pair of field glasses and wearing a tribute to her favorite of the quartet. The pictures on this page of the 1964 Beatles concert here were taken by Vic Condiotty, Times staff photographer.



Mrs. Felter displays another Beatles shirt with her son, John, 10, and talks about the quartet and the slaying Monday of John Lennon.

Staff photo by Greg Gilbert

Yesterday: The Beatles don't seem so far away

Fan still has her albums, posters, shirts

She sat in the living room of the Renton home and looked at the yellowed newspaper picture of the 14-year-old girl. "I haven't changed much, have I? I'm just as skinny," she laughed. "It feels like it all happened yesterday."



ERIK LACITIS
Times staff columnist

It wasn't true, of course. "Yesterday" was Friday, August 21, 1964. Yesterday was a girl named Kathie Kovar, wearing a homemade Ringo sweatshirt.

Yesterday was five teen-age girls talking one of their mothers into driving to the airport at 5 in the morning so they could see their heroes. Yesterday was this fading newspaper photo showing Kathie Kovar (now Kathi Felter) in the middle, her arms outstretched, published under the headline:

"Waiting fans practice welcome for Beatles." Now, 16 years had passed since the Beatles first played in Seattle, and a newspaperman going through the photo files had decided to track down one of these girls.

The teen-age girl now was 30. She had married, divorced, and was raising her 10-year-old son, John, alone. Off-and-on, she had worked as a medical receptionist. She had decided to change the spelling of her first name from "Kathie" to "Kathi," just to be different.

"It really does feel like yesterday. Look, I can still remember all their birthdays," she said. George, February 25. Paul, June 18. Ringo, July 7. John, October 9.

"I can remember so clearly that day at the airport. We saw them when they drove by us! Ringo was in the back. He was my favorite. And Paul was in the back. John was in the front seat. He always did act like the leader."

Yes, John. Kathi Felter and her son were watching the Channel 11 movie when it was announced on television. No, no, it must be wrong, Kathi Felter thought, I can't believe it. Then her mother called. Have you heard, have you heard? He's been shot!

Yes, John. Kathi Felter still has the 50 pictures of the Beatles, the homemade British flag made out of a pillowcase, the Girl Scouts handbook in which she once had written "Ringo" all over the pages.

She looked again at the photo of the 14-year-old girl she once was. "How I screamed when I saw them," she said. "I went home hoarse."

The newspaper files had a couple of hundred photos taken when the Beatles played in Seattle in 1964 and in 1966. Only a few were ever published. Today, accompanying this story, some of those photos will be printed for the first time — fascinating images of a long-gone innocence.

Yes, John.

"It got to me today when I was watching the TV

news," Kathi Felter said. "Why shoot him? It's such a waste. If I had the money, I wish I could be in New York to mourn him."

She was holding one of her old Beatle sweatshirts, one with a reproduction of the group's photo.

Kathi Felter's son asked which one in the photo was John. "That one," Kathi Felter said. "Remember watching them on TV when they showed 'Help!'"

"Oh, yeah, I liked that movie!" the boy said. "They were all getting chased because they wanted

Vigil tomorrow at center

There will be a vigil in memory of John Lennon at 11 a.m. tomorrow at the International Fountain at Seattle Center. The event will coincide with vigils for the slain artist throughout the nation at a time requested by his widow, Yoko Ono.

Ringo so they could get his ring! Mom, that man who got shot, he was older than you!"

"He was exactly 40 two months ago," Kathi Felter said. "Remember when we watched their other movie on TV? Remember 'A Hard Day's Night'?"

No, the boy said. The mother described the movie a little. The boy still couldn't remember. "Well, that was a couple of years ago," she said. "They'll show it again, I'm sure."

"Mom! You know the song I liked best in that other movie?" the boy said. "The one that they're singing in the snow! What was the name of it?"

"That was 'Ticket to Ride.' I told you I remembered all their songs," Kathi Felter said.

"Mom! Remember when you used to have that picture of the Beatles in your room!" the boy said.

"That was my 6-foot poster of Ringo," Kathi Felter said. "I finally took it down. But I've kept it. I kept all that stuff. I've got all their records, too. I replaced some of the old ones ... I buy them in stereo. I still play them."

Her son was asked what he thought of that music.

"I like it," he said. "I like ... what's the name of that song, Mom?"

"One of your favorites is 'Please, Please Me,' isn't it?" Kathi Felter said.

"Yeah, that one's great," the boy said.

"The music doesn't sound dated, does it?" Kathi Felter asked him.

"No, I like them, their records sound new, just like Billy Joel," the boy said. His mother nodded and smiled, reassured.

By then it was dinner time. A oven timer had gone off in the background. The newspaperman thanked Kathi Felter for her time. That's all right, she said. She began folding her old Fab Four sweatshirt, and the old newspaper story.

"I haven't looked at all this Beatles stuff for a while. But I keep it. I don't really know why," Kathi Felter said. "I guess you just can't part with it."



The business of escorting rock stars to the stage was something new to officers in 1964, as they led the Beatles toward the floor of the Coliseum.



Stanton H. Patty of The Times interviewed John Lennon in 1964.



Hands were a big part of the reaction to the Beatles' concert in the Coliseum.